EXIM policy keeping in view the following objectives :—

(a) the reduction or elimination of licensing and bring about greater automaticity,

(b) export promotion,

(c) optimal import compression,

The main features of the changes are as under :—

(1) Replenishment licensing scheme (REP) has now become the principal instrument for export-related imports It will now be called "Exim Scrip" and can be freely traded;

(2) All exports have a uniform REP rate of 30% of the freight on board (FOB) value from the present rates ranging from 5 to 20 per cent of the FOB value Special rates for gems and jewellery certain metal-based handicrafts and newspapers/ journals/periodicals will, however, continue

(3) The new REP scheme gives maximum incentive to exporters whose import intensity is low like agricultural exports.

(4) Advance Licensing Scheme, under which export linked imports are permitted, is being further simplified and strengthened. The REP rate for Advance license exports has been increased from 10% of the net foreign exchange (NFF) to 20% of the NFE.

(c) As a result of revamping of Import-Export Policy, exports are likely to increase.

[*Translation*]

Review of Textile Policy

*111. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have reviewed the textile policy to tackle the problems of handloom, powerloom, synthetic mills, farmers, labourers and management at various level,

(b) if so, the results thereof;

(c) whether the farmers are not getting remunerative prices for their produce despite record cotton yield;

(d) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard,

(e) whether the Government have studied the report of Abid Hussain Committee; and

(f) if so, the recommendations of the Committee accepted by the Government and the time by which these are likely to be implemented ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT) : (a) to (f) Government have appointed a Committee under the chairmanship of Shri Abid Hussain to review the progress of implementation of the Textile Policy, 1985 The Committee submitted its report in January, 1990 The recommendations of the Abid Hussain's Committee Report are under active consideration of the Government in consultation with State

Governments and various interests in textile industry, the concerned Central Ministries, etc. Government will announce its decisions on the recommendations of the Committee as early as possible.

The Government announces minimum support price for cotton which takes into account the cost of various inputs as well as reasonable return to the farmers. The cotton farmers have been able to sell their produce at prices higher than the minimum support price during 1990-91 season.

[English]

Devaluation of Rupee

*112. SHRI DHARAMANNA MONDAYYA SADUL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the factors taken into consideration by the Government before devaluation of Indian currency in international market; and

(b) the details of assessment made, in respect of each hard currency?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) Adjustments in the external value of the rupee were effected on 1st and 3rd July, 1991 after due consideration of the balance of payments position, international competitiveness of our exports reflected by the movements in the real effective exchange rate of rupee, the state of our foreign exchange reserves and market perceptions and expectations regarding the exchange value of the rupee.

(b) The decision on the recent exchange rate adjustments of rupee was taken in the light of movements in India's real effective exchange rate taking into account the exchange rate behaviour of India's major trading partners, and the inflation rate in India and abroad, and was not based on movements in individual currencies or bilateral exchange rates.

[Translation]

Superannuation Age of Military Personnel

*113. PROF. PREM DHUMAL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to raise the age of superannuation of military personnel also up to 58 years;

(b) if so, by when; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (c) There is no proposal to raise the retirement age of all Defence Services personnel up to 58 years as this would be detrimental to the need of maintaining a youthful profile and fighting efficiency of the forces.

[English]

Closure of Jute Mills in West Bengal

*114. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Jute Mills in West Bengal which are at present